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Release of CIA Report Has Political Overtones

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The State Department released an unpublished Central Intelligence Agency memorandum on world trends yesterday in a move that had more implications of politics than foreign policy.

Release of the document was precipitated by a story on the same report written for publication today by reporter Willard Edwards of the Chicago Tribune News Service. The Chicago Tribune story suggested that the document was an official internal analysis of secret Administration policy. The State Department acted to counter that implication.

What gave particular significance to the sequence of disclosures is that they came on the eve of the opening of the Democratic National Convention and centered on two politically sensitive themes: (1) a forecast in the report that Soviet "hostility toward the West" is likely to diminish and (2) an expression of strong doubt that "victory can be won" against Communist guerrillas in South Viet-Nam.

Memorandum Shown

State Department officials showed newsmen a 45-page memorandum, entitled "Trends in the World Situation,"

ten by Willard Matthias of the Board of National Estimates of the CIA.

Officials said the Matthias document is "a think piece" that does not represent official policy, and dozens of similar documents circulate constantly. They said it was never considered or approved by either the United States Intelligence Board, or by the National Security Council that is headed by President Johnson, with Secretary of State Dean Rusk and Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara among its members. Officials said the Matthias memorandum circulated only at lower levels in the Government.

Two years ago, a similar dispute broke out over a Chicago Tribune account of a 160-page survey of foreign policy by Walt W. Rostow, chairman of the State Department Policy Planning Council.

Dirksen Is Critical

Senate Republic Leader Everett M. Dirksen and Sen. Barry M. Goldwater (R-Ariz.) assailed what they charged was Rostow's theme that the Soviet Union is "mellowing." The dispute intensified GOP charges that the Kennedy Administration was following a "no-win" policy.

Rostow emerged from a hearing before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee with the Democrats slating

on Communism, and Dirksen declaring that the incident was only "round number one" of a long fight. That document was never made public.

The Chicago Tribune account said the current document depicts the Soviet Union "as an increasingly amiable power open to peaceful settlement of international disputes."

That article described the document as a 47-page report, dated Feb. 19, 1964, marked "secret," and circulated in the White House, National Security Council, State and Defense Department. It said a covering memorandum signed by Sherman Kent, chairman of the Board of National Estimates of the CIA, said the document received "general Board approval, though no attempt has been made to reach complete agreement on every point of it" and it was being "circulated for information."

Difference in Dates

The State Department made public a document with the same identification and quotations, although it is dated June 9, 1964, and is not marked "secret" but carries the marking, "official use only." That is the lowest security classification, which some agencies, including the State Department, have eliminated because of its marginal importance.

Much of the Matthias report reflects the Administration's well known and publicly stated major foreign policy theme: That the Cuban crisis of 1962, and the open Sino-Soviet conflict, have altered world power relations, with the United States and the Soviet Union tacitly acknowledging that a nuclear balance of terror exists in the world, encouraging them to search for limited areas of East-West agreement, while their basic differences are still constant. The 1964 Republican platform, and Sen. Goldwater, the GOP nominee for President, reject much of that evaluation.

But the most controversial section concerns South Viet-Nam. The Matthias review states:

"The guerrilla war in South Viet-Nam is in its fifth year and no end appears in sight. The Viet Cong in the South, dependent largely upon their own resources but under the direction and control of the Communist regime in the North, are pressing their offensive more vigorously than ever..."

'Political Contest'

It describes the conflict as "more of a political contest